NEW SOUTH WALES.

BUSINESS STATISTICS - FEBRUARY. 1946.

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### PART I PRIMARY AND EXPORT INDUSTRIES.

SEASON. Successive rain periods during February, 1946 yielded useful to bountiful rains in almost all parts of the State. These, following upon good rains late in January, have completely restored the outlook in the Riverina and much of the Western Division, relieved the dry spell on the South Coast and maintained favourable conditions in almost all other sections. The Hunter Valley, the metropolitan region and an area on the Upper Darling, however, stand in need of more rain.

WOOL. An advisory committee of wool selling brokers has been appointed by the Australian Wool Commission. Australian interests doubt if the J.O. auction selling scheme can commence successfully next season; shipping is the problem, for unless transport is assured oversea buyers are unlikely to compete in strength.

At October 31st, 1945 the British Wool Control held 600 million lb. greasy weight of wool, (about 60% of an Australian clip) and a substantial quantity of wool was in English traders' hands.

The quantities of wool received (768,654 bales) and appraised (617,497 bales) in Sydney this season to February 20th were 110,979 and 19,778 bales, respectively less than in the corresponding period of 1944-45.

WHEAT. With the greater part of the harvest already delivered, and to avert possible damage from damp grain, the Wheat Board closed all silos on February 20th. The Minister for Commerce and Agriculture stated that the Australian 1945-46 harvest was estimated at 144.5 million bushels; about 123.8 million bushels would be delivered; some 20.6 million bushels would be retained on farms and about 64 million bushels would be available for export. (New South Wales harvest 62.5 million bushels, deliveries, 55 million bushels).

The following figures are not official (except as regards exportable, surpluses) but appear good enough to give a rough quantitative idea of the gravity of the world wheat situation. A factor in relief is capacity to move available supplies; European net imports averaged less than 400 million bushels in 1934-38.

SEASON 1945-46. Exportable Sup	p <u>lies</u> . U.S.A., Canada, Argentina and Australia	m. bus.	m. bus. 850-900
Requirements (approximat- ions- derived from various	Europe - South America India East-Replacement of rice - say Other Non-European		
sources)	Deficiency -		120-170

Existing supplies must be drawn upon until Northern Hemisphere crops now in and being planted are harvested from July next enward; the outcome of these crops is vitally important. In Canada and U.S.A. the area planned is 90 million acres - largest of recent years and a trifle larger than in 1939. The Australian target of 15.5 million acres for grain compares with sowings of 8.4 million acres in 1944-45, 11.5 million acres in 1945-46 and an average of 13 million acres in the five years ended 1938-39. Except in marginal wheat areas farmers may sow without restriction; new growers may have holdings registered as "temporary wheat farms." Efforts are being made to arrange importation of 10,000 tractors to facilitate the effort to increase wheat production.

DATRYING INDUSTRY. Coast pastures have been refreshed by recent rains and prospects for autumn production are bright in major dairying districts. Maintenance of the metropolitan whole milk supply is dependent upon further rainfall, but currently full supplies are available to all users. More butter is being made than at this stage of last season.

GENERAL. To contribute to relief of the world food shortage it is Australia's aim to increase exports of meat by 100,000 tons, of dried fruits by 22,000 tons and of canned fruits by 500,000 cases. Last year's exports were 200,000 tons, 23,000 tons and 500,000 cases, respectively.

Rice. The United Kingdom Government has accepted Australia's offer of 20,000 tons of dressed rice from the 1946-47 crop. This defers the restoration of rice to Australian consumers for another year.

Dried Fruits. By agreement the United Kingdom Government is to take the Australian surplus of dried vine fruits in the 1946, 1947 and 1948 crops. Prices per ton, f.o.b., in English currency are Currants, 1 crown and upwards, £40; Sultanas, 1 crown and upward, £52; lexias (4 and 5 crown only) £51.

Mutton prices were increased by  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. lb. (hogget to  $\frac{1}{2}$ d, wether to  $\frac{1}{2}$ d and ewe to 5d. lb.) as from February 25th. Retail prices were raised correspondingly.

Fish. Sales on the Sydney Fish Market were £134,784 in the last 3½ months of 1945, reached £70,953 in January and exceeded the latter sum in February, 1946. The co-operative fish marketing scheme is developing steadily.

Soldier Settlement. Twenty grazing blocks in the west made available late in February, 1946 initiate the disposal of land to returned servicemen. About 7,000 New South Wales discharged servicemen hold certificates of eligibility for settlement on the land.

Irrigation. Bills to facilitate construction of irrigation works for individual private holdings have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

# PART II FINANCE AND TRADE.

GENERAL. War Gratuities of servicemen are to become payable on and after March 5, 1951.

Immigration. It has been announced that Australia will aim at an annual intake of 70,000 adults and 17,000 children by oversea migration.

Oversca Trade. Control over the export of a further list of items (exceeding 50) has been lifted. Included in the list are certain manufactured foodstuffs, zinc, certain concentrates and ores and poultry.

The Disposals Commission is selling surplus war goods at the rate of about £1m. a week.

Army control has reverted from the C.- in C. to a Military Board which first met on February 28, 1946.

Sittings of the Royal Commission on local government areas in the County of Cumberland have concluded.

.. Share subscriptions (750,000) to Bitumen Oil Refineries (Aust.) Ltd. remained open only two instead of four days and closed heavily oversubscribed.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Schome. It is reported that introduction of this scheme is in abeyance indefinitely.

N.S.W. STATE ACCOUNTS. Accounts for the seven menths ended January show a slight betterment (230,000) in 1945-46 in comparison with 1944-45. In 1944-45, however there were special receipts and payments in connection with Treasury bills and exclusive of these revenue and receipts were £0.74m. and £1.3m. greater in 1945-46, giving a net recession with this adjustment of £0.56m. State taxation yielded £0.42m. more, business undertakings had a net regression of £0.36m., with results of the railways £0.37m. and of trams and buses £0.06 less favourable, and those for Road Transport and Traffic Fund and of Sydney Harbour botter by £0.05m. and £0.02m., respectively. Higher sinking fund payments accounted for the increase of £0.12m. in net debt charges.

Revenue and expenditure in January, 1946 each declined (by £0.02m. and £0.13m., respectively) in comparison with January, 1945.

#### NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS.

	R	REVENUE	£million	1	e plane de l'amoré describé per e les automorés de	EXPEN	DITURE	£million		Excess
	From Com'n- wealth Ø		Other Govern- montal-2	Busi- ness U'tkgsx	Notal	Net Debt Charges	Govern- mental	ness	Total	Expend- iture £mill.
		3.21 3.63	6.81 4.16	23°23 22°95	39.78 37.27	8.70 8.82		17.84 17.92		2.30
			-2.65	28	- 2.51	+ 012	- 2.74	+ =08	2.54	03

Includes re-imbursement of taxes and payments towards interest.

Includes (Under Revenue) £3.25 from business undertakings for, and (under expended in rederection of Treasury bills.

x Includes Railways, Trams and Buses, Road Transport and Traffic Fund and Sydney

The State works programme for 1945-46 at £15.35m. is £7.64m. greater than that of 1944-45. It includes(inter alia) £5.21m. for housing (to be advanced by the Commonwelath), £3.8m. for land settlement (mainly of returned servicemen), £2.36m. for Railway rolling stock and works and £0.93m. for works for the Education Department.

large Sydney stores in December, 1945 was 17.9% greater than in Doc., 1944. Increases compared with the corresponding month of 1944 were 37.9% for October of considerable Christmas trade. Sales in December increased in twenty of the twenty-three classes of sub-classes comparing 1945 with 1944 but end-of-year stocks were lower in thirteen. In fact, in the aggregate, stocks were about back to the low level of Dec., 1943, although, up to November, they continued to show increases compared with a year earlier despite the large increases in

Year			VALUE OF STOCK.					
T.O.C.T.			October	Nov.	Dec.	Jan-Dec.	Dec	Jan-Dec.
1943	(-)20.7 (+)11.8	(-) 7.0 (-)11.5 (+) 3.7 (+)21.1	(-) 9.9 (+) 5.6	(-) 1.7 (+)10.6	(+) 5.4 (+) 6.1	(-)11.3 (+) 3.2	(-)12.8	- 0.2

large increases in December compared with a year earlier. As a class women's wear showed a small decrease (6.2%) in stocks (principally in millinery, hostery and fancy drapery). With sales up 23.3% and stocks 18.5% lower in value, the pressure on supplies of men's wear is apparent, but as regards civilian footwear the position has improved with stocks and sales 15.7% and 16.4%, respectively, greater.

general hardware 41.7% and books, stationery, etc., 25%.

Month of				Household	Furniture	
December			Mon's & Boys' Wear	Boots & Shoos	piece Goods	and Hardware
1942 1943 1944 1945	(-) 26.5 (+) 38.6 (+) 15.8 (-) 7.6	(-) 29.8 (+) 26.9 (+) 6,4 (+) 13.0	(+) 26.2 (+) 10.4	(-) 18.0 (+) 19.7 (-) 4.0 (+) 16.4	(-) 4.6 (-) 19.6 (-) 3.2 (+) 4.5	(-) 26.3 (-) 24.5 (+) 9.1 (+) 35.5

# PART III INDUSTRY; TRANSPORT, ETC.

GENERAL. Manpower. All control under National Security Regulations over the employment of males was to cease as from February 28th, 1946. It is proposed to revoke the controls over females, probably as from March 31st, 1946.

40-Hour Week. It has been indicated that the Commonwealth Government will not implement a 40-Hour Week by legislation, but will leave the question for decision by the Arbitration Court.

Airways. Inauguration of an air freight service from Australia to the Far East has been approved. The Commonwealth Government is to purchase British Overseas Airways Corporation's 50 per cent. holding of shares in Quantas.

EMPLOYMENT, N.S.W. Effects of industrial stoppages and power rationing are registered in the decrease in employment in December, 1945 of 12,800, including that of 8,600 males. The number in Government employment was 2,100 greater (with 800 fewer females and 2,900 more males) so that private employment contracted to the extent of 11,500 men and 3,400 women or by 14,900 in all. Because of the circumstances private employment figures for December are unsuitable for comparative purposes, but as regards Government employment it may be noted that there was a decrease of 4,200 in the last four months of 1945, with approximately 8,000and 2,500 fewer employed by the Commonwealth and Allied Governments, partly offset by gains in State and Local Government employment reflecting reinstatement of discharged service personnel.

ESTIMATED SALARY AND WAGE EARNERS EMPLOYED IN N.S.W. (Excludes Rural Workers and Household Domestics but includes Civil

		MALES			FEMALES				
End of Month	Govt.	Private	Total	Govt.	Private	Total	Govt.	Private	
939-July 941-Dec. 943-July 944-Oct. Nov. Dec. 945-Oct.	146.4 156.6 152.5 153.4 152.3	*000 393.4 410.1 365.4 370.7 372.5 374.2 371.1 373.3	1000 529.9 556.5 522.0 523.2 525.9 526.5 525.3 527.5 518.9	°000 19.4 33.4 45.8 44.7 44.5 44.2 39.1 38.0	1000 148.6 203.9 204.1 207.8 209.3 210.3 207.4 210.2 206.8	168.0 227.3 249.9 252.5 253.8 254.5 246.5 248.2	1000 155.9 169.8 202.4 197.2 197.9 196.5 193.3 192.2	1000 542.0 614.0 569.5 578.5 581.8 584.5 578.5 583.5	1000 697.9 783.8 771.9 775.7 781.0 771.8 775.7

(a) Commonwealth, State, Local and Allied.

Decreases of 11,800 males and 3,700 females in factory employment were predominant in the recession in December; these by no means represented the number rendered idle as in many cases employees were given annual holidays and retained on payrolls, and the effects were felt in other industrial groups. In non-factory groups there was a gain (mainly seasonal) of 3,100 males and 2,300 females in retail trade and the return of men (+ 1,600) and retirement of women (- 400) in the transport and communications group was again in evidence.

ESTIMATED TOTAL EMPLOYMENT IN MAIN INDUSTRIAL GROUPS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

and of Month	Factory		Factory &				Retail Trade						
	M.	F.		F.	M.	M.		M.	F.				
	000		1000	'000	1000	'000	1000	'000	000				
939-July	158.8	59.3			Not	availa	ble.						
941-Dec.	213.2	81.8	25.8	.2		81.8	8.4	41.2	44.3	42.6	19.2		
343-July	217.4	94.6	25.1	.2	14.4	81.5	12.9	28.7	38.5	133.2	20.5		
944-Oct.	215.9	91.0	24.7	.2	7.0	84.1	14.0	28.7	37.7				
Nov.	215.2	90.8	24.8	.2	7.2	85.6	14.0	29.1	38.7	35.6			
Dec.	215.0	90.3	24.5	.2	8.5	84.4	14.0	30.5	40.4	35.6			
45-0ct.	202.5	80.8	23.5	.2	3.5	88.2	14.4	31.5	40.1	1			
Nov.	1199.9	82.0	23.7	.3	2.9	89.3	14.2	32.7	41.5				
Dec.	188.1	78.3	22.4	.2	2.7	90.9	13.8	35.8	43.8				

(a) Including education, health, hotels, restaurants, and professional and personal services (except private domestics).

BUILDING INDUSTRY. Building activities are recovering slowly from the set-back caused by industrial disputes and power rationing in December, 1945. Shortages of materials remain a major difficulty. A bill for re-acquisition by the State Government of brickworks at Homebush Bay is before Parliament.

Private permits issued in Sydney and Suburbs in January, 1946 were of a total value of £838,000, including £597,000 for new housing and £147,000 for factories (new and additions). Building on Government account in the metropolis totalled £309,000, including £239,000 for new dwellings. The aggregate of £1,147,000 for the metropolis was fully comparable with the pre-war total, contrasting with the monthly average of only £280,000 during 1944. Lifting of control over house building up to a value of £1,200 in October, 1945 (to an area of 1,200 to 1,250 sq. ft. since February, 1946) gave a strong fillip to permit applications. In successive months since July, 1945 the value of metropolitan private permits has been (in £ Thousand) 356, 528, 767, 1,134, 758, 552 and 838, and for Government buildings 286, 680, 570, 621, 375, 525 and 309. (For housing, particulars for Government includes only houses actually commenced).

Government buildings in the remainder of the State were £213,000, including £62,000 for new houses.

And the American State of Stat	ME	ROPOLIS.		GOVERNI	GOVERNMENT.		
Period.	Private.	Government.	Total.	Country.	Total N.S.W.	Col. 1 & 5	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		(6)	
	M	onthly Average	Value in				
ear 1940	977	74	1,051			1,274	
1944	134	146	280	91		371	
1945	439	302	741	132		873	
945-JanJune	209	238	447	119		566	
Sept. Qr.	550	587	1,137	256		1,393	
Dec. Qr.	790	363	1,153	144		1,297	
945-January	145	269	414	147		561	
November	758	547	1,305	192			
December	552	353	905	172	525	1,077	
946-January	838	309	1.147	213			

HOUSING: Work has begun on a programme of 1,352 emergency type pre-fabricated houses a year at Villawood. A housing project to cost £135,000 is being undertaken by the City Council at Camperdown.

In the metropolis in January, 1946 there were 720 houses proposed, including 226 commenced on Government account and 490 for which permits were granted by councils. The number falls below the average of the precoding quarter (for reasons stated above) but exceeds the total for the year 1944 and surpasses the pre-war level for individual houses (flats excluded). There are prospects of progressive increase as resources of materials and labour increase,

as they were doing prior to the set-back at the close of last year. Private permits for houses and Government houses commenced in successive months from July last numbered 297, 610, 805, 1,144, 742, 645 and 720. Other comparative particulars are:-

	NEW HOUSE	S - GOVE	RNMENT	AND PR	IVATE -	SYDNEY	AND SU				
		Year ended Dec'r.			1945.						
	1940.	1944.	1945.	Jan	Sept.	Dec.	1945.				
				June.	Qr.	Qr.					
		Total Number.			Av. Number per			Number.			
				M	onth.						
Private ·	5,706	351	3,860				67				
Government +		228	1,550	59	132		71				
Total +		579	5,410	193	571						

+ Includes converted Army Huts totalling 77 dwellings in 1945, 50 in July-Dec., 1945, and 19 in Jan., 1946.

The number of houses commenced on Government account outside the Metropolitan area in January, 1946 was 52. Numbers in successive months July to December 1945 were 12, 41, 45, 78, 75 and 97.

GOVERNMENT TRAMS AND 'BUSES. During December, 1945 the tramways were materially affected by power rationing; in several weeks no trams ran during Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Skeleton omnibus services were provided, but there was a decline in the number of passengers carried, and on the month a net loss on operations (before meeting interest, etc. charges) of £16,000.

Over the six months ended December, 1945 compared with 1944, gross earnings declined by £16,000 while working expenses (exclusive of interest, etc.) increased by £169,000, leaving net earnings (£96,000) little more than one-third of those of July-Dec., 1944 (£281,000). It may be noted that whereas passenger journeys were 11.1% greater, gross earnings were only 4.5% greater than in July-Dec., 1942, but working expenses had increased by 15.2%, with the result that the amount available toward interest, etc. charges was £245,000 less than in that year. The Government is seeking, but has not yet announced, means to enable this undertaking to operate without loss.

N.S.W. GOVERNMENT TRAM AND BUSES - SYDNEY AND NEWCASTLE

	Mont	h of Decembe	T.	Six months ended December.					
Year	Passenger Journeys	Gross Earnings	Working Expenses	Passenger Journeys	Gross Earnings		Not Earnings		
1939 1942 1943 1944 1945	Millions 33.0 42.9 44.6 47.0 43.1	£000 391 479 495 502	(a) £000 323 404 438 455	Millions 185.1 244.3 255.3 273.6	£000 2,189 2,762 2,827 2,901 2,885	(a) £000 1,867 2,421 2,583 2,620 2,789	(b) £000 322 341 244 281		

(a) Excluding depreciation. (b) Gross earnings less working expenses, available to meet interest, depreciation, etc. on loan debt.